"Destruction of property is mentioned in one song as a penalty for adultery. The poetess--who was the 'other woman'--sang:

If his wife finds out,
Her people will attack us.
If I steal her husband,
They will wreck our house.

Tom--with confirmation from the chiefs, who were all present when the song was dictated by one of them--said that this is a traditional penalty for adultery. Relatives of the aggrieved spouse destroy crops on the land of the homebreaker, cutting down banana trees and coconuts. (I did not make sure whether this referred only to bunches of nuts, or to the coconut trees.) They also destroy any portable property and objects in the house, but not the house itself. This procedure is said to have the approval of the chiefs. But there had been no actual instance of it for a long time.

The penalty for incest--defined as sexual relations with fellow-clansmen or parent--is death or banishment. This was Tom's reply to a question from Spiro. The fact that the penalty is by far the severest we heard of, shows how seriously clan exogamy is regarded. But I never heard of an actual case of incest, and no couples were 'living in sin' in this sense while we were on Ifalik. So as far as we know this rule is only a threat, though perhaps an effective one.

One other hint of law enforcement in sexual relations occurs in a mother's lament for

a daughter who died young. The burden of the whole song is 'Don't gossip about her now.' There is mention of 'a man from the district' coming to spy upon the girl and her lover, because she was considered too young for love. Asked whether this was customary, Tom said it was. But no such patrolmen were on duty during our stay. Presumably one would be assigned by the chiefs in case of complaint or scandal."

2: Damm et al. --76
116, 837, 684

(1909) 1938

Woleaians
Ifaluk

Adultery occurs. If a husband hears about it, he scolds, but does not strike his wife. The adulterer must pay a penalty in the form of loin aprons, wooden boxes, and small or large canoes.

2: Damm et al. --82 [5] (1909) 1938 Woleaians
116, 684, 643 Ifaluk

The chief does not intervene in a case of adultery. If the guilty man wants the woman, the husband surrenders her, but at a high price (large canoes, loin aprons, chests, etc.) If the culprit does not wish to take her, he does not pay so much; for example, a small canoe, or a large chest. In any case, the husband leaves his wife. If she has any children, the penalty is larger. The children go into the husband's house, but they are permitted to visit their mother.

2: Damm et al. --189 [13] (1909) 1938 Woleaians
116, 684 Faraulep

If a man commits adultery, he is punished by having to pay a high fine.

2: Damm et al. --192 [5] (1909) 1938 Woleaians
116, 684 Faraulep

Adultery is punished by fines.

4: Krämer--116 (1909) 1937 Woleaians
116, 684 Lamotrek

An adulterer is deprived of all his belongings, bowls, canoe, and even his sleeping mats.

The natives will stand insults against their mother, but not against their sisters.

11: Born--189 (1903) 1904 Woleaians
116, 837, 684 Woleai

Adultery among the inhabitants of the same island is not unusual and is not regarded as anything important since in that case the inhabitants consider themselves almost one family. If the offender comes from another island of the atoll, however, adultery is considered a serious crime and is revenged. As soon as a crime of this sort has been discovered, the word spreads to all the islands, and almost all the men sail to the island of the guilty man to punish him. They burn his house, cut down his breadfruit and coconut trees, and break his canoe, in short, he loses his fortune. There is never any corporal punishment.

28: Spiro--127 [4] (1947-48) 1949 Woleaians
116, 203, 839, 684 Ifalik

"The concept of rape (garo) is known to the people, but as far as I know, it has never occured on Ifaluk. My informants did know of one case of rape that occured on Satawal, an atoll in the Central Carolines. (6) Eight men working on a canoe in the bush fell upon a lone woman and all had intercourse with her.

A variation of rape, ganou, is found on Ifaluk. A man will enter a house at night, and copulate with a woman while she is sleeping. Should she awake and object to his behavior she awakens the household. (7) Again, the incidence is negligible."

"6. This incident is of interest for it indicates that the people do not live a completely insular life, but that news and gossip from the other islands is diffused throughout the area.

7. It is of interest to note that the verbal taboo on sexual terms obtains even in this situation. The women does not say that a man is copulating with her, but states that a man is in the house."